Defeat at the Box Office
—Gunnar D. Kumlien

THE

Commonweal

North and South

MYTHS ABOUT DESEGREGATION

by Mabel M. Smythe

Religion in India

CHRISTIANS UNDER NEHRU

by Anthony J. Parel

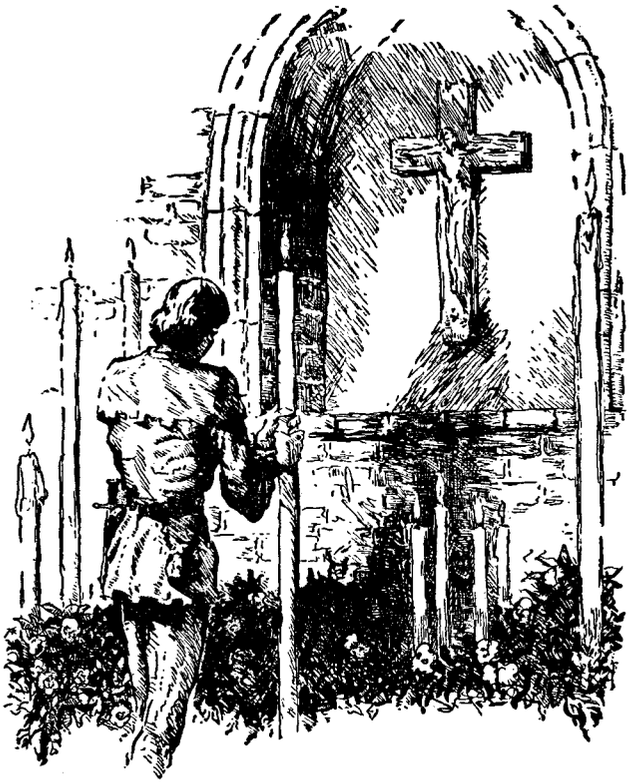
Feodor Dostoevski

PROPHET WITH HONOR

by Philip Scharper

'olume LXIV, No. 5 May 4, 1956 Twenty Cents

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Measuring Up" to a Saint

In France and England during the Middle Ages it was the custom of wealthy parishioners to donate candles tall as themselves for use on shrine altars.

This practice gave rise to the expression of "measuring up" to a saint.

People of moderate circumstances brought flowers and later, small candles—simple offerings which gradually evolved into the present day Vigil Light.*

Today, Vigil Lights burn before countless shrines and side altars throughout the world, serving as public acts of faith—external symbols of private devotion encouraging others among the faithful to pray in their hour of need or thanksgiving.

Will & Baumer
CANDLE CO., INC.
THE PIONEER CHURCH CANDLE MANUFACTURERS OF AMERICA
IN OUR SECOND CENTURY OF FINE CANDLE MAKING
Syracuse Boston New York Chicago
Montreal Los Angeles

*Vigil Light is the trade mark name identifying votive lights made exclusively by Will & Baumer.

PURVEYORS TO THE VATICAN BY APPOINTMENT

THIS WEEK

Week by Week 111

Myths About Desegregation
by Mabel M. Smythe 115

Christians Under Nehru
by Anthony J. Parel 117

Defeat at the Box Office
by Gunnar D. Kumlien 120

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 121

Of Note 122

Communications 123

Prophet with Honor
by Philip Scharper 125

Books 126

THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
PHILIP SCHARPER

Contributing Editors
PHILIP BURNHAM
JOHN C. CORT
ANNE FREMANTLE
PHILIP T. HARTUNG
RICHARD HAYES

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1956 in the U. S. A. by the Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685.

U. S. and Canada, $7.50 a year. Foreign, $9.50. Single copies 20¢.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE PRESIDENT AND POLITICS

ONE OF the most remarkable aspects of the Eisenhower Administration has, perhaps, drawn less comment than it deserves. This is the fact that, from his inauguration until now, President Eisenhower seems to have become increasingly dissociated from politics in the popular mind. Most Americans seem to regard politics as a rather grubby game at best, and they have, in effect, come to view "Ike," not as a player, but as a kind of umpire, who can be trusted to see that fair play, sportsmanship and all that are observed by those who play the game.

Placing the Chief Executive (who is also, by tradition, head of his party) on a pedestal above politics is peculiar to the present Administration, although Mr. Eisenhower does not seem to have deliberately, or even wittingly, brought it about. Neither has he done anything, either deliberately or wittingly, to stop it. Indeed, most of his major actions in office have served only to broaden the base of the pedestal.

Thus, dealing with the politically explosive natural-gas bill, Mr. Eisenhower, while explicitly agreeing with its objectives, vetoed the bill because of the "arrogant" lobbying which had accompanied it. Similarly, his recent veto of the farm bill, admittedly designed as an emergency measure to deal only with the present peril of "small farmers," has been widely acclaimed as a victory of principle over expediency. In speaking to the nation he said, "I was told, 'What a risky thing in an election year to disapprove this bill.' I am no political expert. I have only one yardstick. Is it good for America?"

Incidents and statements like these have served to keep the popular image of him as a "President above politics" untarnished. An immediate effect of thus having a hero in the White House has been to absolve him, more and more, from responsibility for the performance of his Administration. In a manner almost without parallel in American politics, the popularity of the President continues, while resentment mounts against his appointees and their handling of the duties assigned them. The jeers are always for the team, never for the coach.

THUS, if responsible observers like James Reston of the New York *Times* are right, any resentment felt in farm areas is directed at Secretary of Agriculture Benson, and not at the President who appointed him. In the Northwest, there is considerable opposition to the Administration's "give-away program" on natural resources, but the bitterness is reserved for Mr. McKay, who, as Secretary of the Interior, was merely carrying out Mr. Eisenhower's policies. The critics of foreign policy reserve all their rocks for Mr. Dulles, and those who maintain that our military potential has become dangerously second-rate direct their attacks against the Secretary of Defense or the frugal Secretary of the Treasury, but never at the military professional, General Eisenhower.

This tendency to regard the President as the arbiter, rather than the author, of Administration actions is not only alien to American political tradition, but is also destructive of the governmental process by which, under the party-system, ultimate responsibility for the conduct of national affairs is laid to one man, the Chief Executive. Further, President Eisenhower's policy of delegating more and more authority to his associates has already made it increasingly difficult to determine his actual share in the work of government. This fact makes it all the more important that, in the process of delegating authority, he must not be allowed to delegate also ultimate responsibility.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What is at stake is nothing less than the most important political power of the American citizen —the power to influence the course of government by his vote in a Presidential election. If the present gap in popular thought between the President and his Administration widens, it can mean that Presidential elections may hinge to an ever greater degree on personalities, rather than on questions of public policy and the conduct of the most responsible *political* office in the world.

BRITISH LOTTERY

GOVERNMENT resort to lotteries, hitherto so alien to the Anglo-Saxon world, is rarely viewed as a sign of financial strength. Britain's adoption of an official "semi-lottery" scheme is typical in this respect. The past year, which witnessed the loss of a quarter of their slender dollar and gold reserves, has verged on the disastrous for the British. Devices such as those currently brought into play by the Eisenhower Administration to stem inflation here would be quite unequal to meeting Britain's desperate plight.

But whereas Latin America and many European countries go in for government lotteries on a large scale to supply needed revenues, the new British scheme has in view another objective. The aim is to stimulate savings in order to reduce domestic inflationary buying of consumers' goods. This has cut down the amount of British goods available for export, increased imports to Britain and cut into the savings required to build up British industry to the point required to enable it to compete effectively in the world. There is an urgency about the Conservatives' effort to encourage savings.

Unlike the purchaser of the usual lottery ticket the British citizen who joins the ingenious new scheme does not risk his capital. His "premium bond" continues good even though he is not one of the few lucky ones at the quarterly drawing. His bond is eligible for the smile of fortune each time and it is redeemable at face value whenever he wants to quit the game. Only the interest, a negligible amount on a unit investment of $2.80, is up for division among the prize-winners four times a year. That the plan has the small investor in mind is indicated by the expected $700 limit for a single individual's premium bond holdings. A few of the winners get the peak award of a thousand pounds sterling; a larger number are to receive lesser amounts.

This is expected to supply real competition for the football pools, small bets on horse races and other gambling which prospers under private auspices in Britain. It dramatizes the need for national savings. But it is widely held to represent a lowering of the moral tone in Britain, particularly by those religious bodies that rate gambling in any form among the more heinous capital sins. There is also anxiety lest the scheme defeat its purpose by diverting funds from normal capital investments. It is being introduced most hopefully at a moment of gradual economic revival. Things still look desperate but there is an outside chance of progress toward a stable pound and the economic power that so long made Britain a leading factor in an expanding and embattled world.

BATTLE OVER ILO

THE "OF NOTE" section of this issue contains substantial excerpts from a statement by the Catholic Association for International Peace on the question of U.S. participation in the International Labor Organization. In it the CAIP presents what seems to us an overwhelmingly convincing case for continued, even intensified, U.S. participation in the ILO, and this despite the fact that the Soviet Union and some of its satellites now participate in its affairs. Aside from everything else, the simple fact that the Communist delegates are outnumbered in the ILO governing body at a ratio of thirty-nine to one makes the fears of Communist domination seem fanciful in the extreme.

The United States has not quit the ILO. But since the CAIP statement was written the effectiveness of U.S. participation has been seriously lessened. The present ceiling on this country's share of the ILO budget is $1,750,000. Next year the

NEXT WEEK

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON writes, in the Spring Book Number, about Christendom and the Ideologies.

"During the last two centuries . . . nationality has taken on the place of religion as the ultimate principle of social organization, and ideology has taken the place of theology as the creator of social ideals and the guide of public opinion. All over the world, beginning in Western Europe and extending gradually to the most remote regions of Asia and Africa, a change has taken place in the conditions of human existence and in the ways of social thought."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ILO is planning to improve and expand its operations, and the Eisenhower Administration therefore asked that the ceiling on U.S. expenditures for the ILO be raised to $3,000,000. In response, Senator Bricker of Ohio introduced an amendment to deny any increase in U.S. funds unless the delegates from Communist nations were unseated. When it came to the test, the Bricker limitation passed by a 43-to-40 vote; all but eight of the Republican Senators participating voted for the Bricker amendment and against the Administration, including the Republican majority leader, Senator Knowland. Thus, with a kind of Baby Bricker Amendment the Senator from Ohio managed on a small scale precisely what his larger and more famous amendment threatens to do on a large scale—the imposition of a severe limitation on the power of the President in the field of international relations.

The effects of the Senate action will be almost immediate. When the ILO meets in Geneva this summer, the U.S. delegation can hardly vote in favor of the proposed budget which provides for increased activities by the ILO, since the U.S. is already refusing to pay for any of them. Then the Soviet Union will be able to turn this negative vote into a propaganda victory for themselves, the position of the United States inside the international organization will be weakened, and that of the Communist nations helped.

The ironic part of all this may be found in the provision of the Senate amendment which limits U.S. participation unless the delegates from Communist nations are unseated. In reality, this is an impossible condition; responsible observers say there is no chance that the Communist delegates can be ousted at this time. In effect, then, the Senators set up a qualification that is impossible to attain—perhaps because many of them really did not want the U.S. to participate in the ILO to begin with, or perhaps because the appearance of a "tough line" with the Russians is a good thing to take to the voters.

In its broad outlines there is nothing new in this kind of problem. Here in the United States, for example, ADA was established as a new, liberal organization when its founders decided they could not beat Communist entrenchment in a previous organization. Inside the CIO, many battles were fought against the Communists and won, but in the case of some Communist-dominated unions the parent body eventually had to oust them completely and set up new organizations. In each specific case of this kind, an individual decision has to be made. Such a decision is rarely easy, and if the verdict is in favor of withdrawal one can never be sure that the decision was the correct one. Right now, for example, if the U.S. and other free nations withdraw from the ILO, despite the fact that the ratio against the Communists is today thirty-nine to one, and if the Communists are ever able in the years ahead to achieve a dominant position inside that organization, it certainly would not prove that the Bricker forces were right all the time, although it is equally certain they would claim to have been.

In the case of the ILO, however, we do not consider the decision to withdraw or to participate in any way difficult. To set up the impossible condition that the Communist delegation be unseated as a price for increased participation by the U.S. strikes us as the worst kind of empty, ritualistic anti-Communism—the kind of action that looks only to the outward form and disregards completely what the actual net effect of an action will be. That effect, in this case, would be a defeat for the United States and a clear-cut victory for the Communists, all without any effort on their part. Why Senator Bricker and his colleagues in the Senate who voted against the Administration proposal should consider the outcome a triumph is beyond us.

SAILORS' RETURN

THERE are occasions when people for various reasons actually have preferred life under Communist auspices to existence in the free world. The American prisoners who chose to remain in China after the Korean War appear to supply a striking instance. But such was hardly the case with the five Russian sailors who recently flew back home in a Scandinavian plane after several months of refuge in the United States. There is plenty of evidence that they took off under duress.

The ease with which they returned to the USSR is truly disquieting. It raises several grave questions. To what extent did the Soviet delegation to the UN misuse its presence here to persuade the sailors by threatening reprisals on their relatives at home? If the five set off of their own free will, why did twenty Soviet agents escort them to the airport and prevent all contact with American friends? Why was the normally hard-bitten U.S. Immigration Service so obtuse as not to grasp the situation, and why did it permit the sailors and their guards to board the plane after the briefest routine hearing, from which interested American agencies were barred?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMUNISM'S CHANGING MASK

THE REVELATIONS concerning Stalin, Communists and satellite governments continue. In comparison with the startling information we have already received, even the highly charged, melodramatic and implausible plot of an E. Phillips Oppenheim thriller is sober and prosaic. And there seems to be no immediate end in sight to the disclosures.

One of the most recent items concerning Stalin is that until 1913, and for a long time previous to that, he was not only a trusted member of the Bolshevik underground, but a Czarist spy. Writing in *Life,* Alexander Orlov, who was, before he came to the West in 1938, a high-ranking NKVD officer and a prosecutor with Andrei Vishinsky at the Soviet Supreme Court, presents the evidence against Stalin. The evidence presented by Mr. Orlov is both more interesting and convincing than his subsequent speculation, and it would seem to mark the nadir of Stalin's fall.

Within Russia itself the revision goes on with unswerving devotion to the new policy. *Soviet State and Law,* the leading Soviet law review, has now denounced the practice of trial by confession and has criticized the prosecutor who most fully developed it, Mr. Vishinsky. In so doing, the magazine paves the way for the next logical step, the rehabilitation of those who were purged by Stalin in the famous bloody trials of the thirties. And Stalin himself continues to be saddled with the crimes and guilt of the past decades.

The Russian satellites also tend to move in new orbits of friendship and reconciliation. Poland has recently announced that it is preparing an amnesty for its seventy thousand political and criminal prisoners.

While we can sincerely rejoice at the release of prisoners, the disclosures of truths so long obscured, and acts of cooperation on the part of the Russians, we must not act as if the millennium has arrived. It has not. For even as we hear of new freedoms within Russia we learn how they treat those who actively dissent from official declarations. On March 9, the people of Tiflis gathered to celebrate the third anniversary of Stalin's death. Although it is probable that they were inspired less by loyalty to Stalin than by Georgian nationalism, they were honoring the man as they had long been taught to do. But what was, only yesterday, a duty and an honor is today a heinous crime. And almost one hundred of these citizens were shot down by the soldiers of the new regime.

Nor can the release of prisoners in Poland obscure the memory of those sixteen thousand exiles in England who marched in silent protest when Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin paid their visit. Nor can we think that the satellites are relaxing when we hear that Yugoslavia is again forming youth brigades so that the youth of the country will not be lost to Western ideas.

In his speech before the newspaper editors, President Eisenhower rightly challenged the Russians. He recognized that Russian tactics may change, but their goals remain the same. He called upon the Russians to release the staggering number of people they have subjugated and imprisoned. This is a demand we must keep before the Russians. Not until the prisons of Eastern Europe are unlocked, and a measure of freedom restored will we approach the relatively prosaic, sober level of the Oppenheim thriller.

THE DAR AND IMMIGRATION

WE HAVE been reading reports on the latest convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and we are determined to look at the bright side of the picture. The DAR is an organization, like the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which has created a definite image of itself in the public mind; if Marian Anderson is barred from Constitution Hall during a DAR convention, people are dutifully outraged, but not really surprised. And, thanks perhaps to the late Helen Hokinson's cartoons, no one can really stay angry at the DAR for very long.

Take, for example, the attitude of the DAR on immigration, which, is, to put it simply, downright awful. But since Franklin Delano Roosevelt almost caused a riot by addressing the assembled ladies as "Fellow Immigrants," who argues with them? This time, as is their custom, the Daughters overwhelmingly reaffirmed their belief in the exclusionist features of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act. After all, as one lady said to great applause, "If we take in too much of varying philosophies, America will be gone." But at this convention there was a loyal Opposition to urge an end to what was termed "blind support" for the law, and to label the national origins system of present legislation as "illogical" and "patently absurd." It is true that the delegate in question did not win many supporters; in fact, she cast the only negative vote on the resolution. But one vote is one vote, and there is always next year.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Myths About Desegregation

"IN NEWS ANALYSES OF RECENT EVENTS IN THE SOUTH, A PAIR OF FAMILIAR STEREOTYPES HAS EMERGED"

MABEL M. SMYTHE

IT IS easy to assume that the best judges of a controversial situation are those who know nothing about it and are therefore impartial. The presumption behind this viewpoint, apparently, is that what people don't know cannot prejudice them. Unfortunately, however, judges need some information before they can come to a decision, and those ignorant of the background of a subject may be woefully inadequate when it comes to interpreting any information they can get.

I am myself a Negro, and I was born and raised in the South. Since the Supreme Court decision on segregation, it seems to me that many publications are giving a very false impression of the situation. In news analyses of recent events in the South, a pair of familiar stereotypes has emerged. The white Southerner is pictured as a single type, akin to the "wool hats" of Eugene Talmadge's heyday, while the Southern Negro is an ignorant, happy, timid, devoted servant to the whites when not "stirred up" by agitators. Little attention is paid to sensible Southerners who eschew diatribes and violence; almost none is paid to Southern Negroes of intelligence and ambition who want their children to be able to look any man in the eye as an equal. Yet neither group can be regarded as insignificant in number.

The weakness of what people call the "Southern" position is that it does not take into account the fact that nothing short of full equality will leave any people really at peace with themselves and their neighbors. Negroes have had only partial access to their rights as citizens, but many have taken advantage of whatever opportunities have been available, in order to obtain an education, accumulate property, and gain self-respect. Having thus grown beyond the niche traditionally assigned to the Negro, they can no longer conform to the patterns of behavior approved by those who feel that the Negro should "keep his place."

Southern Negroes have learned that an all-white government cannot be trusted to protect rights impartially. Negroes like these sometimes leave the South, but many stay there and become respected members of the Negro community. Many of them avoid contact with the white community and are thus almost unknown to the latter. Perhaps because of this lack of contact, a number of myths have become current in both North and South. Because these notions are widely accepted without real examination, they need to be analyzed carefully and recognized for what they are.

Myth No. 1: All Southern whites are rigidly opposed to desegregation. While unquestionably a majority of whites would continue segregation indefinitely without protest, only a minority really want to keep it at all costs. There is always a danger that a rabid minority may whip up violence, but violence is not what the mass of Southerners want. The South is not wholly in the hands of mobs. They make more noise, it is true, and get into the papers more easily. But a good many Southern whites realize that civilization does not collapse simply because Negro children are admitted to the schools. Some of them are even glad to be rid of the burden that segregation places upon public finance and upon their concept of democracy. There is no effective vehicle for liberal self-expression, because progressive whites have had no dramatic need for registering their non-crusading acceptance of the inevitabilities of history, and because many keep a discreet silence in order to avoid persecution by the militant illiberals of the community. Rabble-rousing puts unorganized progressive citizens on the defensive. But many more white Southerners deplore the Tuscaloosa riots than condone them, and even though the vocal and violent minority may intimidate a more moderate citizen into silence, he is there.

Myth No. 2: Since Negroes prefer to act on the side of law and order, their patience is infinite. It is true that even the most militant Negro leaders prefer court suits and passive resistance to egg-throwing and mob violence; nevertheless, Negroes cannot be expected to sit quietly and accept indefinitely declarations that the white South will never desegregate. Despite the admiration one may have for the forbearance of Negroes in refraining from violence in the Alabama

Dr. Smythe is a New York educator. This is her first article in The Commonweal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

boycott, realism requires recognition of the fact that Negroes are human enough to lose their tempers, too. There are, of course, simple, uneducated Negroes who prefer peace to a struggle for equality they have never known; but there is also a growing number who consider Southern "peace" as a situation in which Negroes remain unprotestingly at the mercy of white whims. In an attempt to escape discrimination, a great many able Negroes have left the South or isolated themselves in the Negro world almost unknown to whites, but many of these resent bitterly the racial discrimination that keeps them from voting or holding positions commensurate with their abilities in the community of which they are a part.

Myth No. 3: The push for integration comes from Northern "agitators," not Southern Negroes. Many people like to believe that Southern Negroes are all docile and ignorant, unless they are "stirred up from the outside." This is simply not so. The Alabama bus boycott, for example, is a grass roots movement if ever there was one. Negroes are a more varied group than many whites realize. They differ widely not only in physical appearance but also in economic and social status, occupations, political parties, religions. Although the casual observer may see only the poorer, less educated Negro, who may not actually have resigned himself to his status, but who has learned to hide his bitterness under a mask of easy-going acceptance of segregation, there are many others whose resentment of racial discrimination is keener and much closer to the surface. The average white person rarely gets an opportunity to learn what even these Negroes think about integration, because they have learned to be wary of letting white people know the extent of their dissatisfaction with the *status quo*. But the unrest and tension are there, nonetheless.

Myth No. 4: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is extremely radical. For forty-five years the NAACP has fought gradually and always peaceably for enforcement of the Negro's legal rights. It has never advocated violence or even tried insisting upon the immediate end of all discrimination. If it had wanted to insist upon faster integration, the University of Alabama could have been asked to admit several hundred Negro students at once. As someone has already commented, "Miss Lucy is *one* student. After all, how gradual can you get?"

Myth No. 5: Mob violence will take over the South unless desegregation is halted. A great deal of progress has been made in the South without violence, and only the greater newsworthiness of rioting has kept the general public from hearing as much about successful steps toward integration in other states as about the violence in Alabama. The ease with which Negro students were enrolled in formerly "white" universities in Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, Texas, Oklahoma, Maryland, Mississippi, the District of Columbia, and other areas, has received far less attention in the press than has the single University of Alabama incident. That violence was a mistake, and most of the South knows it. No one is more fearful of a collapse of constituted authority than responsible Southern citizens, unless it is Southern governing officials. If violence takes over even a portion of the South, it will not be because of desegregation, but because those in authority permit an extremist minority to intimidate into silence all effective opposition.

Myth No. 6: People in the South were happy together until the school segregation cases were decided. Those who assert this have not been able to get the confidence of their Southern informants, black or white. The South has had apparent peace, and some places have been free of overt brutality and antagonisms. But the ease with which Negroes were able to organize the Montgomery bus boycott demonstrates the underlying unrest, and the rapidity with which pro-segregation whites turn to or permit violence belies any real confidence on their part in solid friendship between white and Negro communities or confidence in the fairness of neighbors in tolerating differences of opinion. There has been mutual distrust, accompanied by acceptance of the fact that each group needs the other; at the same time, neither has been entirely comfortable in the arrangement.

Myth No. 7: If Negroes will give up insisting upon their rights, they will get them sooner. It is historical fact that the gains made by the moderates have generally been concessions to the fact that a militant minority insisted upon more. Who really believes that without pressure from the militants pro-segregationists would modify their positions at all? Now that the issues have been clarified, voluntary withdrawal by anti-segregation forces would only allow time for pro-segregationists to organize the opposition and devise stratagems designed to prevent further progress in the direction of integration. At no time have the rigid pro-segregationists given any sign of willingness to set a date, even in the distant future, when integration would be agreeable.

I HAVE discussed certain beliefs about the South and desegregation which are widely accepted. All, I submit, are myths, and they should be recognized as such. Admittedly, the desegregation problem is embarrassing to the United States at a time when its every mistake is relished and used against us by much of the world overseas. But the problem is real, and there is no point in clinging to myths, comforting as they may be. There must be an end to segregation, and failure to look at the facts will only make its passing more difficult.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christians Under Nehru

ANTHONY J. PAREL

PROBABLY the greatest boon to Christians in India today is Jawaharlal Nehru. Without his national leadership, their fate would have been far different from what it actually is. To realize what Mr. Nehru's attitude has meant for Indian Christianity, it is essential to note these facts. India is eighty-four per cent Hindu and only two per cent Christian. Indian nationalism has a very strong under-current of militant Hindu revivalism. There are even politico-religious parties, such as the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha, that advocate a Hindu theocracy. Though discredited, they can, in different circumstances, arouse the religious fanaticism of the masses. Further, Christianity is still looked upon—however erroneously—as the relic of the British rule. And the carving out of Pakistan for Muslims has given rise to the scruple that the spread of Christianity would mean loss of another section of India. There is a form of anti-Christianism which seeks to check the progress of Christianity through legislation. Finally, Gandhi's words that he would "certainly stop proselytization" still have the support of some Gandhian sympathizers behind them. These are facts, so that even the most wishful-thinking Christian could not have hoped, without Prime Minister Nehru, for anything more than mere tolerance from the Hindus.

Under Mr. Nehru's government, however, the story has been different. Christians in India now enjoy constitutional rights to practice and propagate their religion—rights established by an almost entirely Hindu body. Not only have diplomatic relations with the Vatican been established, but distinguished Indian Christians have been appointed to very responsible positions in both State and Central Governments. Mr. Nehru's first cabinet had two Christians on it, Dr. John Matthai and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. Sir Maharaj Singh, a leading Christian, was the Governor of Bombay; Dr. H. C. Mukerji is the present Governor of Bengal; Mr. A. J. John was the chief-minister of Travancore-Cochin. Quite recently, Dr. John Matthai was appointed to the Chair of the newly-formed State Bank of India. Father Jerome D'Souza, S.J., has served on the Indian Delegation to the United Nations several times. In addition, one of Mr. Nehru's own private secretaries has long been an Indian Christian.

Mr. Parel, a Jesuit scholastic, is himself a native of India.

These facts indicate that, with Jawaharlal Nehru at the helm, Christians are not merely tolerated but recognized and obliged to contribute their very best. And the one factor responsible for this public array of Christian talent, for this advertising of Christian loyalty, apart from the inherent merit of the persons themselves, is, I repeat, the fairmindedness of Pandit Nehru.

To most American readers that assertion may sound strange. News reporters have created the general impression that Mr. Nehru is an unconscious ally of the Communists, that he has still not decided which to choose, Communism or democracy. The present writer, as an Indian and a Jesuit, as one who has lived and worked in various parts of India for the past ten critical years of India's history, strongly affirms that Pandit Nehru is grossly misinterpreted. It would be the worst exhibition of ignorance, indeed, the worst calumny, to call him a Communist sympathizer.

WITHOUT presenting a comprehensive study of Mr. Nehru's policies, it is possible to point out that in his dealings with the Christian minority he has been just, considerate, and courageous. That Mr. Nehru is both a great democrat and an anti-Communist will be clear from this study of his attitude toward Christians. In dealing with Christians, Pandit Nehru's only consideration has been the determination to abide by just principles. He has not sought popularity with the Hindus at the cost of changing his views on tolerance. On the contrary, he has used his prestige as leader to educate a caste-ridden population in the hard lesson of religious tolerance, which perhaps is the acid test of every democracy.

The Circular which Nehru sent on August 9, 1954 to all the leaders of the ruling Congress Party is the most precious document Christians have to show his sincerity of purpose. In it he laid down the principle to be followed by every member of the Party: namely, an understanding tolerance of religious minorities. "We call our State secular," he wrote. "The word 'secular' is not a very happy one. Yet for want of a better word we have used it. What exactly does it mean? It does not mean a state where religion as such is discouraged. It means *freedom* of religion and conscience . . . free play for all religions, subject only to their not inter-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fering with each other or with the basic conception of the State. . . . Our Constitution is based on this secular conception and gives freedom to all religions, even freedom to proselytize."

To prevent the majority from ruling to the detriment of the minority, he warns the Hindu members of the Party not to use their position in any way which might prejudice the secular ideal. "We have to treat our minorities," he wrote in the same Circular, "in exactly the same way we treat the majority. *Indeed, mere fair treatment is not enough.* We have to make them *feel* that they are so treated . . . make allowances for fear and suspicion, and remember that the responsibility for this lies always far more on the majority than on the minority."

Censuring the aggressive attitudes of certain Hindu bodies toward the foreign missionaries, he stated that such an attitude was "no part of Indian Nationalism" but its very denial, and, as such, should be sternly discouraged. He did not leave any room for doubt in the minds of the Party leaders as to his seriousness or sincerity. The principle had to be followed, he insisted, even to the point of losing popularity and elections. "We must not allow ourselves *even unconsciously* to adopt attitudes which are wrong and opposed to what we stand for," he wrote in the above mentioned Circular. "It may be," he continued, "that by adopting a strong attitude in these matters we displease some people or lose an election. *It is better to do so than to lose our faith in our cause and in our ideal.*"

A MOST spectacular proof of Mr. Nehru's impartiality was given on December 2, 1955, when he successfully intervened in the Indian Parliament to defeat a bill called the "Conversion Bill." It sought powers to legalize conversion by bringing it under

strict Government control. Each missionary was to possess a license which the Government was free to issue or not. The would-be convert was to notify the Government of his intention, and he could become a convert only three months after the publication of the notice by the Government.

Mr. Nehru intervened. He characterized the Bill as deceptive and coercive. However innocent it looked, he remarked, the Bill was aimed against one group, namely, the Christians. As such, he argued, the proper persons to decide the matter were the Christian members of the House, not Hindus. Then came the climax: he told an excited Parliament that Christians were doing much better than others in social and charitable works. Using the report of the committee to study the work of charitable institutions in the country, Mr. Nehru told the House that while the committee had not found anything wrong with orphanages and homes of women conducted by the Christians, it had found "a great deal of wrong" in those conducted by others. He described the latter as "ghastly" and requested the House to study that matter more carefully. The Bill was withdrawn, with only one Hindu objecting. This was a personal triumph for Pandit Nehru, a step forward in democracy, and a relief for the Christians. Without his intervention the Bill would have been law today, as the Hindus were all for it. This one instance shows Mr. Nehru's influence and integrity as leader of all Indians.

On another occasion Mr. Nehru defended the Christians in the Parliament after the last general elections of 1951-52. This time he defended them against the Communists, who shed crocodile tears over a pastoral letter of an Indian bishop. The bishop had pointed out that to elect a Communist regime would be anti-Indian and undemocratic. The Reds alleged that religion was "mixed" with politics. Mr. Nehru replied that bishops too were citizens of the land, and had as much freedom to express themselves as did the Communists. The sarcastic tone was evident in his statement. By contrast with the consequences of Mr. Nehru's attitude, one can think only of the fate of Cardinals Stepinac and Mindszenty.

The attack on an Indian Catholic priest of the Patna diocese by a mob of fanatic village-Hindus "shocked" the Prime Minister last year. He took the floor of the Parliament to condemn it as altogether anti-Indian. "It was a solemn moment," he said, "for the people in the church, when a crowd came from outside and belabored the priest and the congregation, and desecrated the church. This was disgraceful, and absolutely against the spirit of the law and the constitution, and what India stood for." An immediate inquiry was ordered and the offenders arrested.

THE QUESTION of allowing foreign missionaries into India is the thorny problem Mr. Nehru has yet to solve. But he has laid down general principles even here. He asks the missionary to appreciate the national urge, and to abstain from any semi-political activity. The matter was regarded, he wrote to the Primate of Sweden (Protestant) in August, 1953, in its political and cultural, rather than in its religious

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

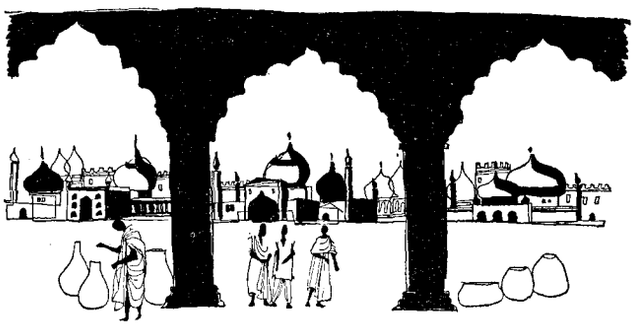
aspects. Certain restrictions were imposed on the missionaries, as they were suspected of political activity. The Christian converts of the Assam Hill tribes, most of whom were Protestants, began to agitate for an independent state. This threatened India's internal and external security, as Assam borders Burma and Communist-controlled territories. "In the border areas," Pandit Nehru has said, "we suspect everybody unless there is reason not to suspect." Naturally the missionaries came to be suspected too. Politically, therefore, the Indian Government does not encourage any foreigner to live in that area. This, as Mr. Nehru has pointed out, "has nothing to do with religion." It is rather the question of admitting foreigners for any purpose that is at issue. Therefore certain restrictions had to be imposed.

Culturally, too, some missionaries gave occasion for complaints, and left much to be desired. In the same letter to the Primate of Sweden, Mr. Nehru wrote that "missionaries from abroad had a tendency to run down India and Indian culture." This was resented by the people, and created ill-will toward the missionary. He expressed surprise that even today some missionaries came to India as if to a backward country to convert heathens who are supposed to be primitive. He alluded to the close association of certain churches with foreign imperialism during the colonial period. Certain adverse reactions resulted from this, he wrote to Bishop Mondel (Protestant), President of the Christian Council of India and Pakistan, but they existed long before the coming of independence. He reasonably reminds missionaries that, as far as possible, converts should be thoroughly Indian in outlook and culture, like the St. Thomas Christians of Malabar.

What is the secret of Nehru's fair treatment of the Christians? Certainly not his own religious convictions. In fact he does not allow them to color his relations with persons of other religions. Perhaps he realizes that in a country like India where Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains, and Buddhists live, it is his great duty and service to set the example of fair treatment and understanding tolerance. But at the root of his spirit lies his pure patriotism. He is a lover of India as a whole, not of this or that religious group.

Christians are faced with difficulties, of course, even now, despite Mr. Nehru. In the northern states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, and Rajasthan especially, the lower officialdom behaves in an un-Indian spirit not in line with Premier Nehru's. That is to be expected in a democratic country, where one has to allow room for human failings. Besides, Jawaharlal Nehru is no Mao Tse-tung. And India no China. So he does not go about chopping off heads and asking his party only to do the thinking. He can use only democratic means, and set examples. Furthermore, one must not forget that it would take many men like Mr. Nehru to enlighten a caste-conscious people on democratic values. What gives the Christian the stimulus to serve and hope for a brighter future, however, is not the absence of troubles, but the manner in which troubles are being solved and the tradition created for future years by Pandit Nehru.

PERHAPS the New Year Greetings sent to Mr. Nehru by the Catholic Internuncio at New Delhi



last January reflect the true sentiments of Christian gratitude and optimism. "The coming festivities," wrote the Internuncio, "provide me with a very welcome occasion to thank Your Excellency most sincerely for the understanding assistance the Catholic Church has been privileged to experience throughout the past year. Your Excellency's recent pronouncement . . . . has affirmed our confidence in the future."

One can only wish that the entire Christian world shared this sentiment toward Nehru. Indian Christians certainly beg God to give their illustrious leader more years, courage, strength, and light to go on with the work of shaping the political destiny of India's three hundred and sixty-four million people.

AN APPEAL

The Salesian Fathers of 148 Main St., New Rochelle, N.Y., are making a special effort to secure funds to enlarge and modernize their Trade School at the Holy Family Orphanage in Bethlehem. It now offers free training in mechanics, tailoring, carpentry and shoemaking for more than one hundred students. "Countries of the Middle East are woefully short of qualified tradesmen, draftsmen and all varieties of technicians. Young men with a good technical background can easily find jobs with decent wages." The Holy Family Orphanage is well known throughout the city where Christ was born. It has been caring for the neediest children in that area for over 90 years. Five years ago the late King Abdullah commended the school for its accomplishments among the workers and the destitute and voiced the hope that "the good already done may be multiplied in the future on behalf of the people of this kingdom."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Defeat at the Box Office

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

EXACTLY as the prophets of ill had foreseen, the excess of female beauty has been the beginning of the worst crisis the Italian film industry has passed through since the period immediately after the war, when it first attracted the attention of the world. Obviously, actresses like Sophia Loren, Silvana Pampanini and others, who have been compared to the famous models of the great artists of the past, are not responsible for the crisis, but it is widely felt that they arose as a first sign of weakness. However great their sex-appeal may be, they have proved unable to compensate for everything else, and it appears more and more that their successes have been too cheap.

While excellent Italian films like Federico Fellini's *La Strada* and Vittorio De Sica's *Umberto D.* continue to fascinate the critics abroad, in Italy the film producers, directors, critics and, above all, perhaps, the actors themselves are increasingly aware of the sad fact that Italian film production seems to have entered a blind alley. Many of them think that it will, perhaps, actually break down and be unable to compete seriously with the production of other countries for a long time to come.

The very first economic signs of alarm came last year in Northern Italy, when it appeared that box-office receipts, which had increased steadily since the end of the war, were suddenly decreasing. This downward trend has accelerated, and receipts for the first months of this year are twenty per cent below the figures for the corresponding period of last year.

The principal reason for this decline is that TV is hitting Italian film producers in a much more disastrous way than it did in the United States, where the latest technical improvements, such as Cinerama and CinemaScope, have enabled Hollywood to reconquer some of its lost ground. In Italy many cinemas had already introduced these improvements; hence they no longer possessed the appeal of novelty when TV was introduced. To make matters worse for the films, TV proved successful to a point which even the greatest optimists did not dare to dream of only a year ago. It was anticipated that TV would never have the same success in Italy as in countries with a high standard of living, for the simple reason that both the TV sets and the licenses would prove to be too expensive. But the Italians actually have been buying TV sets at an ever-increasing rate, paying on installments and skimping on even necessary expenses. First to suffer, naturally, were the movies, which require a tidy sum weekly for a large family. In addition, the state is accused of dealing the mortal blow to an industry already in very bad shape. New legislation is in the offing, a reflection of the increasing state control over film production. Representatives of the Italian government have for many years strongly criticized the famous Italian "neo-realism," for it allegedly does not emphasize sufficiently the "positive sides" of Italian society, and official censorship has had more and more objections recently to the sexiness of Italian films.

THE ITALIAN film industry had, therefore, already exhausted its ammunition when the big TV offensive struck it, and now nobody seems to have the faintest idea how to reconquer the ground it is losing. An everybody's-war-against-everybody has broken out, and the mutual accusations are ruthless and bitter. The producers accuse the actresses of asking wages far beyond what they are really worth, and the actresses accuse the producers of exploiting them. The famous film directors are furious because they feel that their artistic ideals are more and more circumscribed and betrayed and, in addition, they are of the opinion that the scriptwriters no longer have ideas.

And yet, everybody is aware of the fact that there are still film directors like DeSica, Fellini, Rossellini, Visconti, Lattuada and Germi, as well as first-class scriptwriters and actors. The suggestion has been made that the best actors and actresses should pool their talents and their capital and produce their own films. Gina Lollobrigida has already produced one of her latest films on a fifty-fifty basis, and made so much money that Rossellini got enthused by the idea and wanted to organize the whole industry, without remembering how extremely difficult it is to organize Italians. Nothing has come from the project, but the planning goes on frantically, for everybody thinks that something must somehow come out of it, with so much talent going into it.

A typical example of how far the Italian film crisis has gone in the direction of a general lack of confidence is the experience of a group of well-known

Mr. Kumlien is Rome correspondent for the *Stockholms-Tidningen* and The Commonweal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

actors, producers and directors on location in Sicily during the terrible cold spell which paralyzed the whole island this winter. The film, about a Sicilian puppet player, had a co-production cast of actors, including such well-known names as the Italian actress Carla Del Poggio, wife of the film director Lattuada, the American actress Abbe Lane and the British actor Peter Ustinov. It was prepared exactly as all other Italian films are usually prepared, that is, rather loosely, but not more loosely than any other. At the beginning, everything seemed to be exceptionally bright in the beautiful town of Taormina, for the local authorities proved to be willing to share the cost of production, since the film would be useful as tourist propaganda for Sicily.

But it soon turned out that the general lack of confidence of the different people supposed to finance the film was so great that even the funds necessary to carry on the work from day to day suddenly dried up, until finally there was not even enough money left to buy gasoline for the generators. Gloomily, actors and directors sat shuddering by log fires in the icy hotels of snow-covered Taormina, and tried desperately, but without success, to mobilize capital through long-distance calls to Rome and London. Panic broke out in the little town when it was rumored that the whole group was about to leave without paying its bills. The hotel owners confiscated the luggage, the police had to intervene, and, finally, a group of unpaid workers employed on the film established road blocks all around Taormina, firmly determined not to let any members of the cast pass before everything was settled. Only one of the actors, who had a minor role as a priest, managed to escape to Rome—using his priestly disguise. In the end, several film organizations and private people had to pay at least the most urgent bills, so that the group could leave.

After what happened in Taormina with a film perfectly sound according to Italian standards, it is now increasingly difficult to find people willing to finance any film which is not an absolutely safe bet, if there still are safe bets. In the meantime, contacts are established and a deal is about to be made between victorious TV and the tottering film industry. It is too early to have any definite idea of what will eventually come of it, but different proposals are being made. One would result in the absorption of the film industry into TV; another is a compromise, according to which the movie theaters could show a mixed program, consisting of ordinary films and the most interesting TV shows, projected with special machines more or less in the same format as CinemaScope.

These are, however, only proposals and counter-proposals. The one thing which can be stated for the time being is that, as far as Italian films are concerned, everything is drifting as it never has before.

THE SCREEN

PECK UNDER A BUSHEL

NOT HAVING read *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit,* I don't know how closely Director-script-writer Nunnally Johnson sticks to Sloan Wilson's novel; but as I watched the interminably-long movie I felt that Johnson tried to include every paragraph of the original. Poor Gregory Peck, who commutes on workdays from Westport to Madison Avenue, is practically buried under a bushel of woes. Thus, in spite of Darryl Zanuck's superior production, the film has the air of a soap opera in which the leading character is a man who bravely faces life as he suffers through one episode after the other. Patient Peck is burdened with a nagging wife whom he loves for reasons not made clear in the film, and three cute kids who prefer to look at television rather than swarm to him when he gets home after an exhausting day at the office. He has a job with a broadcasting company where his associates are not very cooperative, and seemingly endless financial problems that are further complicated by: a squabble over a house he just inherited, the difficult decision he must make in regard to his own integrity at the new job, and an emotionally disturbing letter informing him that the Italian woman with whom he had an affair during the war and his ten-year-old son are penniless.

While it is possible for all this to happen to one man, the accumulation of events in the movie seems contrived. Nunnally Johnson strains to overcome this effect by developing each character and episode leisurely; as a result the whole film moves too slowly and gets too talky. At times this talk is fascinating, especially during the office sequences with their satire on big business and publicity. Fredric March gives a performance that is both brilliant and touching as the executive who reached the top in business but messed up his own life. His scenes with his weepy wife (Ann Harding), his cold, badly-raised daughter (Gigi Perreau) and his office associates (Peck, Arthur O'Connell, Henry Daniell) sparkle—not kindly but with vitality. Compared with March, Gregory Peck comes through rather coldly. This is surprising, because the role involves enough suffering to win sympathy and Peck plays it in the Gary Cooper-James Stewart-Boy Scout tradition. Perhaps Peck's Mr. Upper-Middle-class lacks warmth because his family is so chilly—with the indifferent children and Jennifer Jones as the ever nagging wife. While the picture as a whole is as gray as its title, its main points about responsibilities in life and many of its individual scenes are put over well. Particularly engrossing are the flashbacks with Marisa Pavan and Peck in Italy, the torturing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

later scene in which Peck tells his wife about Marisa and his son, the sequence near the finale when the Judge (Lee J. Cobb) approves of Peck's plan to send Marisa a monthly sum of money, and, best of all, the expertly-acted, touching scene in which March, almost thinking of Peck as his son, tries so desperately to win his approval while Peck, wanting to help the man and remain in his good graces, reluctantly gives in, but resolves not to get caught in a big-business trap. It is unfortunate that all of the film is not of this high caliber.

THE NEW Cinerama project, "Seven Wonders of the World," aims to have something to please everyone, and everyone who likes an old-fashioned travelogue, spiced up with Cinerama's three-dimensional effects, will be pleased with it. After Lowell Thomas opens the film in his study, the screen expands to its mammoth proportions and shows us the one remaining Wonder from antiquity—the pyramids. Then we are taken on a hasty tour of the world so we can select for ourselves today's Seven Wonders. The choice could include the skyline of New York City, the jungles of Brazil, beautiful gardens in Japan (but not the dancing girls in them who looked so Roxy-trained), the Taj Mahal, the Himalayas, Victoria Falls, the Parthenon and the Grand Canyon. All of these magnificent sights are made doubly impressive in 3-D. Beautifully photographed shots of the Holy Land win attention, as do the realistic effects of a run-away train at Darjeeling. The most interesting scenes for me were those taken in Rome by Ted Tetzlaff showing the closing ceremonies of the Marian Year, with their first-rate photography of the Pope and St. Peter's. Unfortunately, the script accompanying this new Cinerama is loaded with clichés, but the pictures themselves are elegant and might themselves be included among the seven modern wonders.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

OF NOTE

CATHOLICS AND THE ILO

THE SUBCOMMITTEE on Economic Life of the Catholic Association for International Peace recently issued a statement on the International Labor Organization. Catholics from all countries have played an active part in its work. Excerpts from this statement are given below:

The International Labor Organization (ILO), one of the oldest of the so-called specialized agencies of the United Nations, is currently being subjected to severe criticism in certain circles in the United States on the grounds that the organization is now dominated by the Soviet Union and some of her satellites and is being used by the Communists for their own evil purposes. Within recent weeks this criticism has taken the form of an outright demand that the United States withdraw from the ILO. The extreme nature of this criticism and the persistence with which it is being repeated and publicized have forced a number of American Catholics to make a searching examination of conscience with regard to the ILO. The question inevitably arises: If the ILO, as is claimed, is really an instrument of Communist expansion, should not the United States break away even at the risk of destroying the organization? . . . The ILO issues no binding instructions; it works by means of persuasion. [Yet] its influence is very real. . . . Does not the work of Catholics within the ILO—however admirable it may have been—belong to the past? Has not the situation changed since the Soviet Union and her satellites have become members of the ILO? Does not their membership in the Organization provide them with a forum for expounding their own ideas and spreading their propaganda? May Catholics continue to work in an organization in which Communists are associated with them? Does this not ignore the clear warning of the Holy Father, in his encyclical, *Divini Redemptoris,* that "No person who wishes to preserve Christian civilization may collaborate with Communism in any way whatsoever"? Does Catholic participation in the ILO violate the Decree of the Holy Office of July, 1949, which forbids Catholics, under ecclesiastical penalty, to promote or support Communism?

It is true that the Communists have thirty-two votes out of a potential two hundred and eighty votes in the ILO Annual Conference, and that they are represented in the ILO Governing Body in the ratio of 1 to 39. We must also keep in mind that in the international labor field there are, besides the Communists, others who are either steeped in or tinged with Marxian doctrine. Nevertheless, the ILO is not a Communist organization or a Communist-dominated organization. Catholic participation in the ILO—and the same may be said for U.S. participation in general—is directed toward making the principles of social justice prevail in the international field. When Communists appear on the scene, are we to withdraw and make a weak surrender without a fight?

Here in the ILO we have the whole world of labor represented. When we work to protect the truth and show that it is only on the basis of sound principles of social justice that labor can find an answer to its problems and preserve the freedoms and dignity of the individual, are we not contending against Communism and Marxism? If the ILO were to become an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instrument or agency of Communism or Marxism, then indeed we should be the first to denounce it and to recommend that the United States withdraw from it. As long, however, as it remains what it is, we should remain in it and contend for what is right. We have a duty as a nation to make our contribution to the international family of nations. In doing this, we must not be merely negative in opposing what is false, but also constructive in trying to make sound principles prevail.

Instead of advocating withdrawal, it would be preferable for American Catholics to insist that the United States participate in the ILO in a constructive, intelligent, and wholehearted manner, accepting its full share of responsibility for shaping the activities of the Organization so as to promote social justice and international peace. This requires the cooperation of Americans from all walks of life who can work together with imagination and common sense—of government officials, trade unionists, and employers. Our government should accept, not evade, its responsibility in the matter of conventions on labor standards. Our government, employer, and worker delegations should seize the opportunity to use the ILO as a forum to promote social progress and to stimulate the improvement of social and economic conditions in less developed countries. It is time to go forward and assume leadership, not to withdraw and allow the Communist bloc to benefit from our default.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that Catholics who are interested in this controversy will want to keep in mind that the Holy See, as already indicated, has been one of the ILO's strongest supporters from the very beginning of the Organization. In November, 1954, the Holy Father enthusiastically welcomed the members of the ILO Governing Body in a special audience at the Vatican and, echoing the sentiments of his predecessor, vigorously endorsed the important work that they are doing for the cause of social justice. "Over the past thirty years and more," His Holiness said, "you have patiently and untiringly built up an achievement of which you can justly be proud."

In January of the present year, Father Joblin, a French Jesuit, was appointed to the staff of the ILO, replacing Father Albert LeRoy, S.J., a veteran member of the ILO secretariat. Father Joblin's appointment was made with the advice and consent of the Holy See, long after the problem of Communist representation in the ILO became a public issue. This obviously indicates that the Holy See is not prepared to withdraw its support of the Organization.

In summary, the Communist problem in the ILO is admittedly a serious one, but surely it can be handled by methods less drastic than the withdrawal of the United States from the Organization. As a matter of fact, United States withdrawal would only make matters worse and would play directly into the hands of the Communists. In the absence of the United States, the Soviet Union and her satellites could then more easily use the ILO as a sounding board for their own propaganda to the embarrassment not only of the United States but of all the other countries of the free world. Indeed, there is reason to believe that the Soviet Union and her satellites have come into the ILO precisely for the purpose of destroying the organization. It is our judgment that United States withdrawal would help them to achieve this end.

COMMUNICATIONS

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Portland, Oregon

TO the Editors: In defense of your March 2nd editorial against capital punishment, I should like to say that the objections of Richard Pilger seem quite irrelevant at best, if not dangerous. Be it granted that, by ultimate definition, punishment is oriented toward retribution as such, "that good shall be rewarded and evil punished"; yet I submit that for the state to undertake such retribution is not only unnecessary but evil. Why it is unnecessary is inadvertently pointed up by reader Pilger himself—"surely the everlasting fires of hell do not burn simply to encourage sanctity." In the absence of an explicit mandate from God, human powers need not assume that they must serve as agents *ici-bas* of the wrath to come. The supposition of such a mandate has been an undying pagan thesis in statecraft.

Beyond its mere impertinence, an intent to retribution by the state is in reality a grave social evil, oppressing all history. Of the *fact* of compensatory justice we are made aware both by the reasonable chastisements of other humans and by the recoil of irrational emotion and thwarted nature. But of the *just measure* of such compensation we are poorly apprised. So very much may be too much, so very little may be too little, but even this crude indirection is based on a discovery of the wit and will of the sinner at the time of his sin. If such a surmise is difficult in the case of a man reflecting on himself, possible but rarely as he judges his intimates, why should we expect of a man coming into state power a peculiar competence in administering retributive justice. His position may further remove him from such a competence for a number of reasons—his remoteness from the people for one, and for another the very definition of crime by social criteria primarily, by moral criteria only indirectly. There is, furthermore, the principle of the corrupting influence of power. What declares

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

itself as an act of justice devolves into an explosion of offended majesty. Thus not without reason does The Commonweal editorial use the term "revenge."

All this is not to deny to human authority the right to punish judiciously within the other two standards named—correction and prevention. As for your critic's hypothetical "crime so unique that it does not admit of repetition," by similitude to other crimes it could still commend state action, corrective and/or preventive. Lacking these proper standards of interest in the case, the magistracy could only leave it to heaven.

WILLIAM J. PEASE.

"MASTER FACULTIES"

Ithaca, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I should like to take issue with your editorial ["Plan for 'Master Faculties' "] in the March 30 issue which seems to endorse, at least by implication, Mr. Alvin Eurich's suggestion that college educators 'drop the cliché of small classes,' and assemble faculties of 'master teachers' able to reach the greatest possible number of students by means of large classes, recorded or televised lectures and whole teaching sessions put on film.

Such a program may enable more schools to give more degrees with a minimum of expense and effort, but we are only deceiving ourselves if we think that the end result will be "education." Your statement that "a poor teacher in a small class is still communicating mediocrity, and an excellent teacher can still impart a high quality of instruction to hundreds" overlooks the fact that a large class is no less likely to get a poor teacher than a small one. What I have seen of higher education in the past nine years convinces me that mediocrity can be communicated more effectively by forming larger classes and by using film and TV, but that good pedagogy can only suffer from such measures.

Prospective collegians and their parents would be well-advised to be wary of "master faculties" and other such streamlining no matter how attractively it is packaged in brochures and school catalogues. They should remember that the "master teacher" is one whom the student can see on television or in a crowded lecture hall but not in his office or a classroom. And in our enthusiasm for films and television let's not forget that the fruits of top-flight scholarship have been available to the literate for some time now, thanks to the printing press.

Small classes and a high ratio of teachers to students are presently and will remain important criteria for determining a good school.

JAMES E. WARD.

Second Printing

THE

Commonweal

TREASURY

A paper-cover book, 128 pages, containing selections from The Commonweal Reader, which was published by Harper in 1949 at $3.50:

Thomas Merton
John Cogley
Michael Williams
C. G. Paulding
Jean C. de Menasce
James N. Vaughan
H. A. Reinhold
George N. Shuster
Victor White
Karl Stern
Georges Bernanos
Jacques Maritain
George H. Dunne
Nicholas A. Berdyaev
David Ross King

With an introduction, "What Is The Commonweal" by the Editors

$1 postpaid

N.Y.C. residents enclose 3¢ stamp for each copy to cover Sales Tax.

BOOK SERVICE DEPARTMENT

The Commonweal

386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

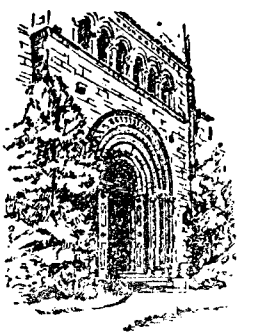
CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE

Chestnut Hill
Pennsylvania

Conducted by the Sisters of St Joseph

Approved by the Association of American Universities.

For further information write to the Registrar.



Prospective students should make early application

For $5 you can give 50 pounds of local foods to

an exiled Vietnam family
a Korean war widow and her children
exiles from Red China now in Hong Kong
poverty-stricken jobless families in Japan

Your personal gift can reach quickly and directly to these neediest families in Asia's areas of crisis.

Earmark your contribution for one of these destitute families to —

Catholic Relief Services, N.C.W.C.
350 Fifth Ave., New York 1, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Prophet with Honor

PHILIP SCHARPER

THIS YEAR marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the death of Feodor Dostoevski. At one point, many years ago, the Russians had officially consigned Dostoevski to their literary limbo. Then, perhaps because they became aware of the growing admiration for his work in the West, the literary commissars went through an agonizing reappraisal of their own and restored Dostoevski to a place of honor. Now a special committee has been established in the Soviet Union to sponsor special celebrations in honor of his anniversary. Exhibits depicting his life and writings have been prepared, and the State Publishing House has begun to issue his collected works.

All this belated official recognition is, to say the least, odd, for Dostoevski represents ideas and attitudes which have long been proscribed in Russia. Indeed, until his recent restoration to a place of honor in the Soviet literary world, the great Russian novelist really lived on, not in his homeland, but as an honored ideological exile in the West and most notably in America. There, admiring students have been poring over his works for three decades, and he has come to be regarded as one of the great and authentic voices of mankind. Somehow or other, many Americans have come to feel closer to Dostoevski's Russians—brooding, volatile and endlessly communicative about their psyches though they are—than to the people parading and posturing through the pages of most American fiction. And this fact alone is a good measure of Dostoevski's genius.

Dostoevski was a prophet, a critic of society, as Dante was, and Homer and Virgil were not. Deeply involved in his own time and culture, as perhaps any great writer must be, he was able also to transcend and criticize the civilization of which he was a part. Possessing, as he did, the peculiar combination of deep vision and deep charity which is the mark of the prophet, Dostoevski probed and pierced the complacencies of modern civilization. This fact explains why the Soviets originally ignored Dostoevski and why they are likely to encounter the greatest difficulty in trying to manipulate him to their advantage. Dostoevski is not easily manipulated, and the Soviet attempt to do so is both daring and, for them, dangerous. To circulate his collected works, as the Soviet is apparently about to do, risks exposing the premises and practices of totalitarianism to the most telling criticism.

Dostoevski saw the central fact of human experience as moral freedom, the freedom of choice between good and evil which is at once God's greatest gift and man's heaviest responsibility. Writing from the heart of his Christian convictions, Dostoevski saw the essential struggle of man, not in the clash of class against class, but in the clash between good and evil in every human will. As Dmitri Karamazov remarks to his brother, Alyosha, "God and the devil are fighting, and the battlefield is the heart of man." From this conviction comes Dostoevski's central treatment of character, which sees each man as a "double-man," half-loving and half-hating virtue, half-desiring and half-rejecting his own freedom. Because Dostoevski sees the moral struggle of the individual as the most important fact in the universe, he is endlessly concerned with questions of guilt, sin, penitence and responsibility. In Dostoevski's world men and nations must answer for their works; both lie under the judgment of God.

FROM a Soviet point of view, this absorption with morality must make a Dostoevski novel a disturbing and dangerous work, better banned or burned than read. Could a Soviet citizen read in *Crime and Punishment,* for example, Dostoevski's indictment of Napoleon for his sins against humanity without recalling the periodic purges, the Crimean massacres or the slave-labor camps of Siberia, substantially unchanged since Dostoevski spent four years there as a political prisoner? Hardly a page of Dostoevski would not question or condemn the "new Russia." The official atheism of the Soviet, the very concept of the omnipotent state, with all its attendant savagery and degradation, would have seemed to Dostoevski evidence that his beloved Russia was even more sick in the twentieth century than she had been in the nineteenth. In his eyes the Communists would have seemed degenerate sons of degenerate Nihilists, agnostics embracing violence and worshipping Western science and technology.

The most political novel Dostoevski ever wrote was *The Possessed.* In its central idea may be seen his judgment of Nihilism and, by anticipation, of Communism. Reflecting on the Gospel incident of the

Mr. Scharper is an associate editor of The Commonweal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

devils driven from the man of Gerasa into a herd of swine, Stephen Verhovenski muses: "And such as we (the old Liberals) and the Nihilists . . . we senseless and possessed ones will fall headlong from the cliff into the sea and all be drowned . . .; but the sick man (Russia) will become whole, and place himself at Christ's feet. . ."

This reference to Christ is typical of Dostoevski; he was, in the most reverent sense of the term, "Christ-intoxicated." His mind was shaped largely by a single book, the New Testament, and from it he drew his major literary themes and his deepest personal convictions. As a result, the Dostoevskean universe is at once more real and less real than the world which witnesses the daily struggle for "advantage" by both men and nations. On every paragraph of the Marx-Lenin evangels Dostoevski would probably write only a single comment: "Salvation for man will not come from man." Certainly, his message will be a strange and disturbing one in Soviet Russia despite all efforts to "rehabilitate" him.

"Humble affection," wrote Dostoevski, "is a terrible power which effects more than violence; only active love can secure faith for us." Such statements are so characteristic of Dostoevski that even the blindest propagandist cannot ignore them; he must try to explain them away. Thus in the December issue of *Novy Mir* the Russian critic M. Yermilov attempts to dismiss Dostoevski's mysticism: "The religious 'solution,'" he says, "was but a forlorn attempt to illuminate the murky darkness of hopelessness and despair by a dim candle." But the "religious solution" cannot be filtered out of Dostoevski, no matter what the Soviet commentators write; the prophet cannot be turned into a political pamphleteer. As W. H. Auden has said recently: "Society could not exist if everybody were like Dostoevski or his characters. But no society can be decent which forgets the kind of criticism he offers us."

BOOKS

Of Deliverance Gained Through Active Despair

THE HEEL OF SPRING. By Frank Rooney. Vanguard. $3.95.

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

"FOR TEN years now I've been attending a seance, with you and the others acting as alternate or substitute mediums, the half-dead invoking the dead, leaning forward in the contrived darkness to watch the ghastly trumpet float toward its luminous mark in the air and to hear from those grisly lips yet another mawkish parody of outworn hopes, fabulous passions, and obscene desires."

That is how Mr. Rooney, in the person of his narrator, sums up *The Heel of Spring*. The sentence is also a fair example of Mr. Rooney's style. Every unhappy family, we have been told, is unhappy in its own way and if you like American Gothic you may like *The Heel of Spring*. I don't.

Until the age of twelve Charles Blackwell thinks he is an orphan. Then he learns that his father is alive. Four years later he learns that his father is in prison for the murder of his mother. And so the unoffending orphan acquires a heritage and a new name, Charles Lindell. The burden is great and, luckily, the father is trampled to death in prison by his fellow inmates. After the funeral young Charles, now in his twenties, writes to his uncle Arnold, "My name is Charles Blackwell, not Charles Ainsworth Lindell III." So be it. In name, in will and, the reader wearily hopes, in the courts of memory as well, Charles is Blackwell and free. But he is not happy because he does not know who he is.

Who am I? That's the crucial question these days. Hipster, Hypocrite and Hero, they all want to know. They protest too much. I suspect what they want is an Irish answer, "Well, who are you?" Whereupon, the sad young men smile sadly, the wise young men smile wisely and the earnest young men, taking a brief rest from the smithies of their own most precious souls, also smile. All answer as one, "I am what I am. Would you like to feel my wounds?"

Mr. Rooney is among the earnest. He is also talented. His first novel, *The Courts of Memory,* revealed a temperament patient enough to develop a story at a leisurely pace. It gave one reason to expect better things from him. He enjoyed language; his dialogue was crisp and often witty — it still is — and he showed a zest for the ordinary that is not too common nowadays. *The Heel of Spring* is a disappointment.

The main action of the story is the narrator's progress from the passive despair of his youth to active despair of defiance and pride. Mr. Rooney, indeed, presents this change as if it were a deliverance of sorts. It is just this active despair, this defiance, that Kierkegaard had in mind in the following passage: "The self is its own lord and master, so it is said, absolutely its own lord, and precisely this is despair, but it also is what it regards as its pleasure and enjoyment. However, by closer inspection one easily ascertains that this ruler is a king without a country, he rules really over nothing; his condition, his dominion, is subjected to the dialectic that every instant revolution is legitimate. For in the last resort, this depends arbitrarily upon the self."

Beneath all the horror and desperation, drunkenness and nymphomania, guilt, respectability and benevolence of *The Heel of Spring* is a frivolity, an ultimate lack of seriousness, that enervates the style and mocks the emotions. What Mr. Rooney needs is a myth, for in art you must either believe or make believe and he does neither.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Behavior of Communism

SIX KEYS TO THE SOVIET SYSTEM. By Bertram D. Wolfe. With an introduction by Admiral Leslie C. Stevens. Beacon Press. $3.75.

By JAMES RORTY

IN THE cold war with totalitarianism which it did not choose, but from which it cannot escape except by surrender, the free world must somehow achieve a consensus of policy and a strategy of defense and counter-offense. For a period of about three years, from the winter of 1950 to the spring of 1953, the Voice of America seemed at moments, to those who heard it, to be expressing such a strategy. To a considerable degree, that was because, by the grace of Bedell Smith, the Voice had a strategist. His name was Bertram D. Wolfe, the author of these studies; he even had a title that certified, by implication at least, his function and responsibility: Chief of the Ideological Advisory Unit of the Voice of America.

Some of the studies here assembled were intended as guides to the production of the political commentaries which the Voice was then beaming in some forty languages, including the Urdu. Sometimes the strategist composed his own broadcasts, and when the Voice put them on the air the embers of freedom glowed in Warsaw, in Prague, in Budapest, and in the purlieus of the Kremlin, which promptly ordered an intensification of the Soviet jamming operations.

That was before the Voice was moved to Washington—minus its strategist and his entire staff. All that brave effort was miserably done to death by the whimpering response of Secretary Dulles to the bang-bang attack launched on the Voice during the winter and spring of 1953 by Senator McCarthy.

Although now relatively unused, the theory and strategy developed during that period remained in the record. They are here brought between covers, along with some earlier and later studies, to make one of the most informed and informing books about the nature and behavior of Soviet totalitarianism that has yet seen print.

The six "keys" which constitute the sections of Mr. Wolfe's analysis deal with the internal struggle for power and for the succession which is inseparable from totalitarian dictatorship; with the coordination of culture by which history is rewritten, science politicalized and stultified, education militarized, and the arts emasculated; with the terrorization and enslavement of the Soviet peasants and workers; with the enforced unanimity of Soviet "elections" contrasted with the endemic revolt of the prison camps and the flight through the Iron Curtain of refugees who "vote with their feet"; with the blackmail and treachery of Soviet diplomacy and totalitarian colonialism; with the atomization of society and the expropriation of the human spirit which totalitarianism must exact as the price of its own survival.

Consider first the struggle for power. The Soviet Party chiefs waited six hours before announcing the death of Joseph Stalin, in a communique which called for "monolithic unity" and warned against any kind of "disorder and panic." Since a totalitarian regime is forever at war with its own people, revolt is alway latent and may be expected to break out whenever a dictatorship, which seized power by force, is succeeded by another dictatorship. Its authority, since its title to legitimacy is no better than that of the regime it replaces, must be enforced by terror and cemented by the blood of purges. Thus, Khrushchev quickly displaced Malenkov and a shot in the back of the head ended the career of Beria, himself the purger of countless others.

Having achieved present control, Stalin's successors proceeded to control the past by using Mr. Wolfe's second "key"; immediately the history books, which Stalin had so frequently revised, were again rewritten in order to cut the charismatic *Vozd* down to size. One of the author's most brilliant chapters is entitled "Operation Rewrite: the Agony of Soviet Historians." The agony is unending, since it is impossible for the historian to anticipate future political contingencies; no matter what he writes, some part of the past must sooner or later be expunged or warped to serve the demands of the new configuration of power. Thus a person named War Commissar Leon Trotsky becomes an "unperson," and the name of Meyerhold, the great innovator of the Soviet theatre, disappears from the histories of Russian art. Significantly, thus far neither threats nor blandishments have persuaded any Soviet historian to write a history of the Communist party.

Nothing is free in the totalitarian universe, but everything changes, and changes again, sometimes back to what it was. At the behest of the fanatical quack Lysenko, whose patron was Stalin, the great Russian geneticist, Vavilov, was sent to an Arctic labor camp. Seven years later, after Soviet agriculture had had time to suffer the consequences of this disastrous politicalization of science, the official Soviet botanical journal declared that Lysenko's views had been proved nonsense. Promptly, Lysenko's name was removed from the school texts, by educators who had mastered the Soviet precept that the truth is what serves the state. In Russia, the school man's task, in Mr. Wolfe's words, is to reduce "man to citizen, citizen to soldier, soldier to mechanical robot,—but a robot more terrible than Frankenstein's monster, because he is endowed with a dynamism which comes from passion and a living brain, a brain not extinguished but formed and deformed by planned 'engineering of the soul.'"

One of the tests of a good theoretician is his ability to predict. Judged by this criterion, Mr. Wolfe rates well, although, as he cheerfully admits, he guessed wrong often during his apprenticeship as historian and political analyst. In 1944, in an article that told the truth about the Katyn Forest mass murders for the first time in America, Mr. Wolfe predicted that Po-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

land would lose its independence. In 1946 when Stalin was giving sole recognition to Chiang Kai-shek and the State Department's Far East experts were lauding the "Chinese agrarians," Mr. Wolfe predicted that the mainland of China would fall to the Communists. In 1952 he predicted that in the struggle for the succession Malenkov would soon be out of the running. In 1953, when Malenkov was still top man, he predicted the rise of Mr. Khrushchev.

In July of 1953, in his swan song as ideological adviser of the Voice, Mr. Wolfe typed a policy memorandum, which the State Department might re-read to advantage today, if it is interested in actually winning the cold war, not just coexisting with an enemy who *does* intend to win it. What Mr. Wolfe recommended was simply that we use, against that implacable enemy, "the main weapons that the Bolsheviks thought they could use in the early days against the rest of the world — nationalism, labor rights, agrarian reform, abolition of poverty, an economy of abundance, anti-imperialism . . . to defend ourselves against the encroachment of slavery and to win the struggle for the spirit of man."

Art and Sanctity

LIFE OF LITTLE SAINT PLACID. By Genevieve Gallois. Illustrated by the Author. Pantheon. $1.75.

By PATRICIA DONEGAN

THE ACHIEVING of sanctity, the complete absorption of a soul into God, is the drama unfolded in a straightforward little book written and illustrated by a sixty-seven year old Benedictine nun, Mother Genevieve Gallois. Translated from the French by the Monks of Mount Saviour Monastery, the *Life of Little Saint Placid* is drawn with a purity of line and text in wonderful harmony with its subject matter. The illustrations are remarkable line cuts full of movement, humor and vigor, which go hand in hand with the text, lovingly etched by the same hand.

Originally intending to produce only a name-day present for one of the nuns in her convent, Mother Gallois has created, in Little Placid, a character in three dimensions, who, with all the attendant distractions and problems of mortality, proceeds toward sanctity with the straightness of the plumb line he hangs from his cell to remind him of "the straight line which must be the armature of my soul, and the road from my soul to God."

Like Placidus, the Roman saint who was brought to Father Benedict at the age of seven, Little Placid proceeds from innocence into love with the "yes" he said to whatever God sent him, whether the rain or the sunshine, and Mother Gallois has traced this growth with remarkable sensitivity in her illustrations. There is a sweetness here which leaves no taint of the saccharine, and a humor which, happily, escapes whimsey, as the young monk accepts monastic life. There is a perfectly wonderful drawing under the text, "Little Placid is happy," which is all fluid line and movement, a characteristic of the earlier illustrations in the book. Then, directly following, is a dig at the snide and sanctimonious, a satirical sketch of Brother Palladius who tattles on Little Placid in a very holy way.

As the young Benedictine is given the tougher meat of spiritual adventure, the illustrations become more vigorous. The lines are heavier, the figures simpler, almost stark. Although Mother Gallois' work has been compared to that of Durer, Rembrandt and Goya, and is, in some ways, suggestive of Durer's woodcuts, there is something here that is peculiarly hers, a utilization of the power of the primitive with the freeness of the modern. There is movement even in the heaviest of the drawings. If not in technique, at least in effect, she has something in common with Kaethe Kollwitz, her German contemporary. Interestingly enough, Mother Gallois cannot resist a slight digression to reveal her own attitudes when she sends her little Benedictine off to an art exhibition and takes a dig at pure abstraction which says, "you cannot deny the value of line in itself." She answers, "Surely not, and you are free to go no further."

The *Life of Little Saint Placid* is a charming and wonderful little book. Both text and illustration, particularly the latter, make its reading a happy experience.

Patterns of Life

DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP. By Zevedei Barbu. Grove Press. $3.50.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

ALL BUT the most case-hardened sociologist may quail upon learning that this is a study of the "psychology and pattern of life" of democracy and dictatorship, based on an effort to find common ground between psychology and sociology. When the author goes on to suggest that from this common ground he proposes to look at "the problem of democracy and totalitarianism from two points of view at once," the reader may well be tempted to say that "he's had it." But the reader who possesses the special virtue of fortitude necessary for reading psycho-sociological books (word-joining soon becomes as compulsive as a bowlerful of reefers) will find virtue rewarded. The thesis is unconvincing but the detailed judgments are often interesting and valuable.

The concept, "way of life," is the common ground which, in the author's thinking, joins social and political structure and behavior and personality. Democracy fosters and requires flexibility, rationalism and individualism. It presupposes security and a sense of confidence in man's capacities. But the tempo of change, which democratization may on occasion impel, may also evoke insecurity and doubts about man's capacities. Contemplating this experience, Mr. Barbu notes that though his initial predisposition in favor of democracy persists, he became convinced "that totalitarian forms of our times sprang up from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the historical process by a certain [moral and psychological] necessity."

Where democracy in its confidence diffuses power, societies under stress behave very differently. Politically, they concentrate power and rigidly organize life's activities.

These responses take two extreme forms, both totalitarian: the irrationality of Fascism and the excessive rationality of Communism. In the former case, reason, having failed to master man's complex environment, is discredited, and life is progressively derationalized. Emotional appeals and attitudes to authority prevail. This resurgence of irrational and magical ways of thinking is Fascism, "a symptom of regression in group behavior." It provides a mystique of action — to quote Mussolini, "Action has buried philosophy."—for Nazi society did not emphasize unity and action to achieve desirable ends. Unity and action were ends in themselves and wholly impermeable to ethical demands.

Nazi social rigidity is paralleled by a personal lack of integration. Lacking self-confidence, the individual Nazi grimly adheres to group ideas as so many shields against himself. The Nazi personality "is afraid to individualize his behavior."

By contrast, Mr. Barbu sees Communism as an attempt to deal with problems of insecurity on a purely rational level. "The lure of science and romanticized scientific attitudes in life constitute one of the greatest attractions of Communism." But Mr. Barbu, also, recognizes that other qualities, ruthlessness, submission and hatred play "a greater part than the rational ones in the process of becoming a Communist and in the specific structure of a Communist group."

By this time Mr. Barbu's thesis is riding high and remains unaffected by this extraordinary qualification. His view of Communism recalls pre-war and wartime opinions: "after all, the Nazis are barbarians while the Communists have a vision of a better future." This may be true, but the vision is based on defiance of the human condition as the religious man sees it—and produces inhuman results. Mr. Barbu notes this but does not make proper use of it.

Two general criticisms of Mr. Barbu's work may be made. First, the Nazi regime endured too short a time and the Soviet Union has remained too inaccessible to permit careful and precise studies of behavior patterns under totalitarianism. Secondly, Mr. Barbu's use of history for evidence is bewilderingly selective and unconvincing. To support his point about security and democracy, he argues that democratization occurs in secure and prosperous periods. It would be difficult to establish such a theme in British history, especially in the eighteen-eighties. Democratic demands and achievements were often part of the insecurity which bred the totalitarian challenges. Moreover, Mr. Barbu's account of the history of Socialism and Communism is too like the historical self-image of the Socialists and Communists and unrecognizable as a history of the working-classes.

The World's Slums

ADVENTURES OF A SLUM FIGHTER by Charles F. Palmer. Tupper and Love, Inc., Atlanta. $4.

By JOHN STANLEY

ABOUT ONCE every six months since he was approximately aged thirteen, this reviewer has been informed by one returned traveler or another that the Park of Culture and Rest in Moscow is shabby and dirty and disappointing and, along with a lack of *chic* among Soviet women, constitutes a condemnation of the Soviet system in particular and Communism in general.

It is Mr. Palmer who has tendered me this semi-annual report this year —along with complaints about the cuisine on Russian railways, comments on the Karl Marx Hof in Vienna, what Mussolini said about clearing the Pontine Marshes, what Edward VIII said after seeing the slums of Clydeside, what F.D.R. and a variety of representatives of the

The presence of **J. F. POWERS** in any publishing season is a literary event and—even better—a reading event. Here is a superb new collection of short stories by the author of *The Prince of Darkness*—stories that brilliantly illuminate the very human precincts of the priesthood, the parish house, and the Catholic Church. "A largely endowed, careful and important short-story writer, one of the best in America . . . every story . . . is the work of a master."—*N. Y. Times.* "Fresh and alive stories, full of compassion and humanity."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune.* "Powers is among the greatest of living storytellers . . . Of all modern writers known to me who have dealt with Catholic religious life . . . (he) is far and away the best."—*Frank O'Connor.* "Go buy this right away."—*Robert H. Flood, C.S.B., Books on Trial.*

THE PRESENCE OF GRACE

Only $2.95 at all booksellers

DOUBLEDAY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schools

RHODE ISLAND

Portsmouth Priory

A Monastery and School at Portsmouth, Rhode Island. A community of American Monks of the English Benedictine Congregation. Inquiries concerning the work of the Monastery, and the qualifications required for the monastic life, should be addressed to the Very Reverend Father Prior.

Portsmouth Priory School

Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 23 miles from Providence, 8 miles from Newport, on inland waters of Narragansett Bay. Conducted by Benedictine Monks assisted by Lay Masters. Five forms, 8th grade and four years of high school. Standard Preparatory Course for all colleges and technical schools. Added opportunities in Mathematics and Languages. College Board Examination. Full facilities for athletics including sailing. Address the Headmaster.

NEW JERSEY

Delbarton School

Morristown, New Jersey. An hour's drive from the George Washington Bridge or Holland Tunnel. A country day and boarding school for boys conducted by Benedictine Monks. Six forms, comprising the 7th and 8th grades and four years of college preparatory courses. Small classes. Thorough guidance department. Complete athletic program. Write for prospectus to the Headmaster.

CLASSROOM SUBSCRIPTIONS

English, Journalism, Social Studies

Classroom subscriptions to The Commonweal may be ordered for any number of weeks at half price, 10¢ per copy, for ten or more copies mailed to a single address. A free copy is added for instructor or distributor. Write Classroom Subscriptions, The Commonweal, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y.

British, Italian and Dutch aristocracy said about slums; and slumming. All this took place mostly in the early and mid thirties.

Mr. Palmer's report is in a windy, personal style filled with quotation marks. Example:

" 'And why,' I inquired, 'hasn't Letchworth reorganized into a straight profit-making enterprise as Welwyn has?'

"Mr. Parker fingered his mustache while looking me straight in the eye.

" 'That is a good question,' he said, 'and I'm glad you asked it. . . . it goes back to Ebeneser Howard. . . .' " And then follow a few unimportant sentences about unearned increment and the real value of land, which are followed by:

"I kept plying Mr. Parker with questions, and Laura (Mrs. Palmer) put in an occasional query from a woman's point of view. All too soon we reluctantly left the delightful Parkers."

And so, on to the slums of Naples! And on and on and on until you end up where you started, the charming verandah of the Palmers' delightful country place outside Atlanta. Mr. Palmer is a "progressive" real estate man from that bourgeoning city. This is not to imply that he is campaigning for integrated housing or anything, but he does believe that slum housing should be done away with; it lowers real estate values for one thing. Also, it raises taxes; slums breed crime and disease. And, of course, there is always the danger that slum dwellers might be susceptible to Communistic ideas. He is an "enlightened capitalist" who voted for Hoover, but later came to admire Franklin Roosevelt and some of the projects he promoted. He fought the neanderthal Bourbons of Atlanta, dined at the White House, traveled in Europe armed with effective letters of introduction, and now, in his twilight years, has written down these memoirs.

The slums of the poor are a terrible thing to behold, and they deserve to be treated with intense seriousness; but then we would have a book far different from Mr. Palmer's.

Reforming Czar

PETER THE GREAT. By Constantin de Grunwald. Macmillan. $4.50.

By JOHN COURNOS

IT WAS Paleologue, one-time Ambassador to Russia, who applied the word "enigmatic" to Alexander I, the Czar of Napoleon's day. The term may be applied no less pertinently to Peter the Great, the Czar who initiated those reforms of "Westernization" which, by gradual historical processes, led directly and inevitably to Bolshevism and those self-appointed autocrats, Lenin and Stalin. The man who built a great city on the marshes of the Neva, a window on Europe as it has been called, did all the spade work for the Red gentry. He saw to it that city folk at least stuck their ornate shirts inside their trousers instead of having them, peasant-wise, flap outside. He had his Court dispense with their beards of which they were unduly proud and he personally snipped off those appendages of re-

Colleges

INDIANA

Saint Mary's College Notre Dame

Conducted by Sisters of the Holy Cross. Fully accredited Liberal Arts College for Women. Courses leading to degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Science, Academic and professional courses in Nursing, Graduate Department of Sacred Theology. Address: Box 71, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana.

NEW JERSEY

Caldwell College

Caldwell, New Jersey. A four year liberal arts college conducted by the Sisters of Saint Dominic. Accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Liberal Arts, Sciences, Business, Teacher Training, Library Science, Music. Tuition $350, Board $550. Degrees: B.A., B.S., A.A. Catalogue: The Registrar, Caldwell, N. J.

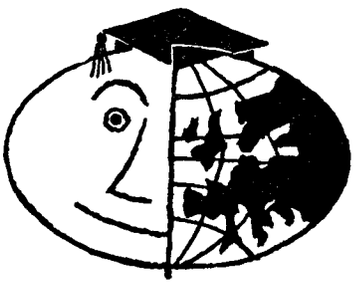
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fractory and reluctant boyars, who impotently submitted to the indignity.

But these things were mere trifles to the other things he learned from the West, mostly by personal visits to England, France and Holland and from foreigners in "The German Quarter" in Moscow. These were shipbuilding—he had not disdained to work with his own hands in the foreign shipyards to learn the trade —modern arms of war, and army organization. The Russian people did not take to these innovations kindly, but even though some regarded Peter as Antichrist they quietly submitted. Shrewd and dynamic himself, Peter surrounded himself with strong competent men, including the Russian, Menshikov, a Scotsman, and a Frenchman. He made merit the sole standard; any man worth his salt found a place with Peter. This policy paid off in handsome dividends, the greatest of which was the military triumph at Poltava over the confident Swedes, a victory which made Russia a power on a universal scale. All this was equivalent to a great revolution, and the great masses never quite caught up with it. And Russia, having escaped the effects of the Renaissance which had swept Europe, was not able to adjust herself to the demands made upon her.

Such is the story that the author competently tells us in this fascinating biography, whose chief value lies in the stress laid on the contemporary background. Peter himself is portrayed as a great man who swung between the extremes of greatness and uncouthness, which too often verged on clownishness. He treated his own son Alexis with exceptional barbarity, simply because he did not come up to his expectations.

If the humanities did not thrive in Peter's day, they came to fruition much later, in the poet Pushkin who, in the author's final cryptic words, "blended the Russia of Peter the Great with Russia the eternal."



STUDY NOW IN EUROPE

The Full Year Plan
Two Semesters of Study
Travel through 8 Countries
$1780.00

Students live in Austrian homes and attend the English taught courses at the University of Vienna.

Price includes: round trip ocean passage, room and board while in Europe, travel through 8 countries, tuition and registration fees at the University.

Open to students with at least one year of college. Age limit: 18 to 25. Application deadline:
June 15th, 1956

Sailing date: September 8, 1956
ss Zuiderkruis, from New York

For further information, please write to:

The Institute of European Studies
7325 South Maryland Ave.
Chicago 19, Illinois

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Campus tradition of charm and friendliness since 1840. An accredited college; B.A., B.S., B.F.A. degrees. Music, art, secretarial training, journalism, home economics, teaching, speech and radio. Interesting cultural, athletic, social programs. Well-equipped buildings. Catalog.

BOX 106, SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS, INDIANA

LA SALLE
MILITARY ACADEMY

America's foremost Catholic Military School, under the Christian Brothers. Intellectual progress, spiritual development, physical fitness. Accredited college preparation. Grades 8-12. Small classes. Senior ROTC. 160-acre campus. 73rd year. 50 miles from New York City. Visitors welcome. Catalog.

Box W, Oakdale, Long Island, New York

HST

the most sensitive political antenna of the Democratic Party lays it *all* on the line.

MEMOIRS
by Harry S. Truman
2 vols., each $5. DOUBLEDAY

REVIEWERS

Thomas F. Curley, a New York novelist, is a frequent contributor to The Commonweal.

James Rorty has written widely on political matters, domestic and foreign, for many leading journals.

Patricia Donegan is a free-lance writer living in New York. This is her first appearance in The Commonweal.

M. A. Fitzsimons is a member of the faculty of Notre Dame University and a regular reviewer for The Commonweal.

John Stanley is a frequent contributor to The Commonweal.

John Cournos is a well-known anthologist and a critic of Russian literature.

4th Annual
LITURGICAL MUSIC
Workshop

"The Choirmaster's Workshop"

August 20th thru 31st

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

Flor Peeters	Roger Wagner
Rev. Francis Brunner	Rev. Elmer Pfeil
James Welch	Eugene Selhorst
Rev. Richard Schuler	Camile Van Hulse

Rev. Francis Schmitt

The Creighton University, Omaha, has arranged for three hours credit for qualified persons. For further information write:

Music Department

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

Classified

★RATES, payable in advance: 16⅔c a word (6 words, $1). Centered lines $1 each. 12 words or 2 lines minimum. Discounts: 5% for 3 times, 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times.

IRISH BOOKS AND GIFTS

★ Books, Linens, Gifts, *Catalogs.*
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, INC.
870 Lexington Ave., (near 65th), New York

CHESTERTON AND BELLOC

★Scarce Chesterton and Belloc Books
250 Titles. Free Catalogue.
Prosser, 3118 N. Keating, Chicago 41, Ill.

STATUES

★Every kind of religious statue and painting done to order. Reasonable.
ST. BENEDICT STUDIO
Westport, Conn.

PRINTED LABELS

★ 500 Gummed Labels, printed 3 lines, $1. HERDMAN, 520 Belleville Ave., Belleville, N. J.

WRITERS WANTED

★FREELANCE WRITERS, well acquainted with an industry or firm: top prices paid for factual think pieces on corporate democracy (or its absence), participation in management by employes, shareholders or consumers. First outline briefly to JEFFERY, 246 Fifth Ave., N.Y.C. 1, MU 3-9600.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Then and Now

After World War I the cult of "Nordic supremacy" and distrust of foreigners led to the restrictive American immigration laws of 1921 and 1924 which embodied the discriminatory "national origins" principle. Then, as now under the McCarran-Walter law, The Commonweal called for a more equitable immigration policy.

The prevailing attitude of American citizens toward the question of immigration might almost be studied adequately in two recent symbols: one, the emphasis upon Nordic race, characteristic of several recent writers and, it is said, of the Carnegie Foundation; the other, that kind of cordial welcome to alien, particularly European, culture which has found genial expression once again in the Italian House at Columbia University. Indeed one might almost say that economic factors have played a decidedly minor role in shaping public opinion concerning this question. . . As citizens we are divided into two camps by the prepossessions which, mentally and emotionally, we bring to the consideration of the immigrant. With the theory of automatically self-sufficient race type we here have no sympathy whatever. It appeals only to the kind of people who feel that the Constitution of the United States is intimately dependent upon illuminati whose ancestors slept in spare Massachusetts beds.

(The Commonweal—June 9, 1926)

America's immigration laws are now, and have long been, unfair. They discriminate grossly against countries like Italy and Greece, while in the case of countries like England and Ireland they preserve quotas far in excess of their needs or desires. As a result, although the total allowed regular immigration to this country is in excess of 150,000 annually, in fact less than one hundred thousand regular immigrants entered the country during the last fiscal year. And since the unused quotas of one country cannot now be transferred, the waiting lists in countries with very small quotas grow longer and longer.

Supporters of the present immigration policy can be found in both parties. So can its critics. But in theory, at least, both parties are pledged to the revision of present legislation. So far, however, the efforts of a small but determined band of men in the Congress have managed to defeat every effort to change the basic pattern of the law.

(The Commonweal—March 2, 1956)

THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

Enclosed is $2.00. Please send the next 17 issues to:

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY .....

5-4-56

For New Subscribers:

SPECIAL

TRIAL SUBSCRIPTION

OFFER

17 issues for $2.00

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED